

**Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team**

**Richfield High School
510 West 100 South
Richfield, Utah 84701**

November 10-11, 2004



Utah State Office of Education
250 East 500 South
P.O. Box 144200
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4200

**THE REPORT OF THE
VISITING TEAM REVIEWING**

**Richfield High School
510 West 100 South
Richfield, Utah 84701**

November 10-11, 2004

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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Salt Lake City, Utah

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FOREWORD

The major purpose of the accreditation process is to stimulate school growth and improvement so as to increase student achievement.

In these efforts, the school staff makes a comprehensive evaluation of the school's programs, operations, and results. The school determines how actual practices align to stated objectives and resulting outcomes. It is a three-phased evaluation: (1) self-evaluation, (2) on-site evaluation by an external team of educators, and (3) implementation using units of the evaluation to improve the school by effecting thoughtful change.

The evaluation, November 10-11, 2004, was conducted because of the school's desire to ensure quality education for all students in the school, and to increase student achievement.

The entire staff of Richfield High School is commended for the time and effort devoted to studying and evaluating the various facets of the total program and to preparing the materials used by the visiting team. The excellent leadership given by Principal Randall Brown is also commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for their desire for excellence at Richfield High School, and also for the professional attitude of all members of the group, which made it possible for them to see areas of weakness and strength and to suggest procedures for bringing about improvements.

While these recommendations may be used to solicit financial support to acquire some of the materials, equipment, and services needed to carry out a more effective program, it is even more important that the faculty and administration utilize them as they continue to evaluate and modify course offerings and administrative and classroom procedures to more dramatically increase student achievement at Richfield High School.

Patti Harrington, Ed.D.
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

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RICHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Randall Brown Principal
Richard Barton Assistant Principal

Counseling

Rick Pruitt Counselor
Jeanene Julander Counselor

Support Staff

Office Staff

Elaine Costa
Annette Dickinson
Margaret Kyhl
Genevieve Rodriguez
Larene Reynolds
Ellise Roundy

Media/TLC

Jenni Hunt
Kirsten Weber

Custodians

Ila Brown
Roger Christensen
James Dalebout
Sheri Greenhalgh
Kendall Hansen
Earl Hatch
Carl Julander
Bob Mattinson

Lunchroom Workers

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Terra Cook
Renee Dalton
Vicki Hurst
Lois Robins
Susann Roundy
Shouna Savage
Marie Spencer

Faculty

Brett Beagley
Curtis Benjamin
Larry Black
Nathan Blackner
Shaunna Blake
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Ron Cazier
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Elaine Street
Juri Strong
Claudia Teeples
Sharon Wall
Diana Wetherell

RICHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Richfield High School, in partnership with community and students, is to prepare students to become caring, skilled, productive, and adaptable citizens.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

As Richfield High School, in Sevier School District, we believe that:

1. Education leads to a quality life.
2. Education provides the opportunities for students to become life-long learners and productive citizens.
3. Our school must intentionally provide students the opportunities to systematically develop the full spectrum of cognitive-level thinking skills.
4. Learning should be process-centered and should enhance each student's ability to solve problems, make decisions, take responsibility, and work in groups.
5. All knowledge is interrelated and should be taught that way.
6. Opportunities to participate in provided activities must be open, according to student interest, aptitude, and citizenship.
7. Positive self-esteem contributes to quality of life.

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Dr. Roy L. Hoyt, Hurricane High School, Washington School District,
Visiting Team Chairperson

Mary Christensen, Cedar High School, Iron County School District

Connie Good, Manti High School, South Sanpete School District

Marsha Forsgren, Uintah High School, Uintah School District

Mary E. Moulton, Uintah High School, Uintah School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

RICHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

Richfield High School was formed in September of 1897. Its first teachers were David Nelson and H.N. Hayes, one full-time and one part-time teacher. The enrollment that first year was between twenty and thirty students. At that time there were sixteen school districts in the county, all of which were overseen by Superintendent Jacob Magleby. It wasn't until 1912 that the sixteen individual districts in the county were consolidated into one, the Sevier County School District.

In 1913 a new high school was erected in Richfield. For forty-seven years, from 1914 to 1961, the old building served the community. On February 20, 1961 the current high school was dedicated. This included an administrative office, 700-seat auditorium, and gymnasium.

a) What significant findings were revealed by the school's analysis of its profile?

There was minimal data available in the self-analysis. Information that was provided included faculty members, testing results, school history, and a school needs assessment. On further investigation, it appears that several members of the staff had been assigned the task of gathering data, but it was not included in the self-study.

At the time of the on-site visit, the Visiting Team was provided with information on free and reduced-price lunches, enrollment, ESL, special ed., student ethnicity, and Adequate Yearly Progress results.

b) What modifications to the school profile should the school consider for the future?

Richfield High School is strongly encouraged to continue its efforts to systematically collect and analyze student data to guide the decisions of the school. It is suggested that the administrative staff, Counseling Department, and staff collaborate with the district in designing an effective data-collection and management system that can be used by the various stakeholders within the community. The school is also encouraged to pursue additional helpful profiling data, beyond what has already been collected.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- Look for correlations between class grades and scores on standardized achievement tests.
- Include grade point averages for the various subject areas.
- Look for correlations between student achievement and other measures of student success, such as attendance, course grades, and participation in school activities.
- Investigate patterns of lower-performing students.
- A broad picture of opportunities provided to students needs to be part of the profile, including a list of school clubs and organizations, with the current size and activities of each.

CHAPTER 2: THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

- a) *To what extent has the school community engaged in a collaborative self-study process on behalf of students?*

The Visiting Team found some evidence of the school community's involvement with the self-study. The school conducted a survey of parents, students, and teachers to determine the effectiveness of the school.

- b) *To what extent does the school's self-study accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations?*

The work done in departments shows some effort to identify areas of strength at Richfield High School. Most members of the staff were involved in some aspect of the self-analysis. However, continued collaboration in the ongoing collection of student data and focus groups needs to be emphasized. It is recommended that Richfield High School's self-study include the use of data to drive the decision-making process, to monitor progress toward the school DRLSs, and to guide the activities of departments, focus groups, and school leadership.

CHAPTER 3: INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Richfield High School's desired results for student learning (DRSLs) are as follows:

Effective Communication

- Students communicate with clarity, purpose and understanding of audience.
- Students integrate the use of a variety of communication forms and use a wide variety of communication skills.
- Students recognize and evaluate various forms of communication.

Reasoning Skills

- Students gather information, interpret findings, and communicate results.
- Students use reference material and student generated data to justify their results.
- Students generate and evaluate multiple strategies to solve a variety of problems.

Responsible Citizens

- Students take responsibility for personal actions and act ethically, demonstrating honesty, fairness, integrity, and respect.
- Students respect themselves and others.
- Students will be exposed to cultural diversity and will develop tolerance.
- Students act as responsible citizens in community, state and nation.

Life Long Learning

- Students make a commitment to create quality work.
- Students demonstrate a positive attitude and personal responsibility for learning and personal development.
- Students will question their world.
- Students reflect on and evaluate their performance for the purpose of improvement.

Shared Vision, Beliefs, Mission, and Goals:

- a) *To what extent did the school facilitate a collaborative process to build a shared vision for the school (mission) that defines a compelling purpose and direction for the school?*

There was an initial group of faculty members designated to develop the mission statement. They then presented their work to the entire faculty for discussion, revision, and approval. However, there appears to have been little or no student, parent, or community involvement in the discussions about the mission statement.

- b) *To what extent has the school defined a set of beliefs that reflect the commitment of the administration and staff to support student achievement and success?*

The administration and staff at Richfield High School are very committed to student achievement and success. The Visiting Team noted that some of the belief statements reflect learning outcomes rather than an expression of common beliefs. The Visiting Team would suggest that Richfield High School revisit the belief statements and reword them to reflect belief statements instead of learning outcomes.

- c) *To what extent do the school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's desired results for student learning (DRSLs)?*

The Visiting Team recognizes a connection between the mission statement and DRSLs, and commends each department for developing an application for each DRSL in its area. The Visiting Team recommends that Richfield High School continue discussions about developing ways to teach and assess the DRSLs in the classroom, and how to address the implementation of the DRSLs as part of the school's action plan. The school's action plan needs to align with the DRSLs the school has identified.

Curriculum Development:

- a) *To what extent does the staff work collaboratively to ensure the curriculum is based on clearly defined standards and the Utah Core Curriculum (with inclusion of the Utah Life Skills)?*

The teachers at Richfield High School are familiar with the State Core Curriculum and base their instructions on those standards; departments have used the school-wide DRSLs and incorporated them into their individual departments and instruction. There is limited evidence that teachers take into account the learning needs of students. Based on the on-site visit, there is limited evidence that teachers in some departments are beginning to align curricula to ensure that students are taught the same curriculum, regardless of which teacher is selected for the course. There is very limited evidence of cross-curricular teaming. Teachers expressed a desire to include cross-curricular instruction.

- b) *To what extent does the teaching staff work collaboratively to support the development of a curriculum that focuses on the school's desired results for student learning?*

The Visiting Team commends Richfield High School for its wide range of quality class offerings. However, there is little evidence that shows that data is being collected and utilized in a meaningful way to drive the DRSLs and develop an

action plan. Each department is encouraged to collect and study data related to its department so the curriculum can be updated and modified as needed. The Visiting Team recommends that all departments continue to use data to refine and align schoolwide DRSLs.

Efforts need to be made to coordinate the curriculum to ensure a shared school-wide vision for student learning. Student performance data should continue to be collected so that instruction goals are met.

Quality Instructional Design:

- a) *To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students?*

Observation and staff/student surveys provide evidence that most of the staff members use a variety of instructional methods that actively engage students in meaningful learning. It is also evident that the staff is interested in including other “best practices” that can further engage all students.

Interviews with students indicate that they feel challenged and engaged in their learning experiences. Parents also indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the learning experiences of their children.

- b) *To what extent does the professional staff employ a variety of instructional strategies to ensure the needs of different learners are met?*

There is little evidence that data has been collected which focuses on diverse learning styles or the needs of ELL students. The Visiting Team recommends that the staff continue conversations on best practices such as partnering, jigsaws, scaffolding, hands-on activities, and other inquiry methods. The Visiting Team further recommends that the staff gather data to show the effectiveness of the implementation of best practices.

- c) *To what extent do the professional staff and leadership provide additional opportunities which support student learning?*

The Visiting Team commends Richfield High School for the willingness of the faculty to provide additional opportunities that support student learning. This is evidenced by the Wednesday night tutoring sessions; teachers are willing to spend time before and after school for those students who need help. Interviews with students indicated that the Wednesday night sessions are valuable and highly attended. The Visiting Team further commends those teachers who are willing to spend the extra time with dorm students. The Visiting Team recommends that the staff continue to provide additional opportunities for all students to succeed.

Quality Assessment Systems:

Note: The school did not complete the focus group reports. This analysis is based solely on the on-site visit.

- a) *To what extent has the staff developed classroom or schoolwide assessments based on clearly articulated expectations for student achievement?*

Richfield High School's DRSLs begin to address expectations for student achievement. However, a variety of schoolwide performance standards do not appear to be fully developed. As a result of multiple classroom observations and conversations with multiple stakeholders, the Visiting Team determined that schoolwide assessment design is primarily left to the district or state. The Visiting Team recommends that Richfield High School continue to develop clear expectations that align with the schoolwide DRSLs.

- b) *To what extent are assessments of student learning developed using methods that reflect the intended purpose and performance standards?*

There is evidence that assessments are directly linked to specific instructional uses that promote students' achievement and continuous improvement of their learning. The Visiting Team suggests that the school utilize research-based strategies to differentiate instruction for all learners.

- c) *To what extent are assessments designed, developed, and used in a fair and equitable manner?*

The data is limited, but the Visiting Team found no evidence of unfair assessment practices.

Leadership for School Improvement:

- a) *To what extent does the school leadership promote quality instruction by fostering an academic learning climate and actively supporting teaching and learning?*

The school has established an academic learning climate in which teaching and learning are supported by the administration. Students and teachers feel valued and important. The Visiting Team found that administration touches base with each teacher daily and is with students during class breaks and lunch time.

- b) *To what extent does the school leadership employ effective decision making that is data-driven, research-based, and collaborative?*

Some of the decisions made by the school are based on validated, research-based practices and analysis of information. The decision-making process is collaborative and provides opportunities for the meaningful involvement of the school's stakeholders. The Visiting Team recommends that data be collected and disaggregated to identify population(s) in need of additional resources or attention.

- c) *To what extent does the school leadership monitor progress in student achievement and instructional effectiveness through a comprehensive assessment system and continuous reflection?*

The Visiting Team found that the school periodically monitors student progress in achieving the essential knowledge and skills for their learning. The school is in the process of assessing the effectiveness of instructional practices. There is no evidence that a comprehensive assessment system has been developed; however the Visiting Team is confident that the school has the leadership needed to build such a system. Limited evaluation data was available for the purpose of improving instructional effectiveness.

- d) *To what extent does the school leadership provide skillful stewardship by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources of the school for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment?*

Schoolwide policies and operational procedures are consistent with the school's beliefs and mission, and are designed to maximize opportunities for successful learning. The Visiting Team commends the administration's skillful stewardship, considering the extent and complexity of the campus.

- e) *To what extent does the school leadership make decisions related to the allocation and use of resources which align with the school goals, the achievement of the DRSLs, and school improvement efforts?*

The allocation and use of resources are aligned with the school's immediate goals.

- f) *To what extent does the school leadership empower the school community and encourage commitment, participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning?*

The school has a well-organized and functioning Community Council and school-wide Booster Club. The administration is available and supportive of community concerns.

Community Building:

- a) *To what extent does the school foster community building and working relationships within the school?*

The Visiting Team found evidence that a positive and productive working relationship existed among students, teachers, support staff, and administrators. A strong sense of community seemed to exist among students, parents, teachers, and administrators. Through classroom visits, the Visiting Team found that the learning environment for students nurtured a sense of caring and belonging. The team found a little evidence of collaborative and interdependent teams, but felt that such teams were not used to full their potential.

- b) *To what extent does the school extend the school community through collaborative networks that support student learning?*

The Visiting Team found some evidence that the school engages parents in the learning process. The school has formed a Community Council and has a very active schoolwide Booster Club. The school has developed a strong link with Snow College in Richfield, and that link provides the students with many opportunities for concurrent credit. Linkage to the lower grades was not evident during the Visiting Team's visit. The school has developed a strong network with the community as a whole.

Culture of Continuous Improvement and Learning:

Note: The school did not complete the focus group report. This analysis is based solely on the on-site visit.

- a) *To what extent does the school build skills and the capacity for improvement through comprehensive and ongoing professional development programs focused on the school's goals for improvement?*

The Visiting Team found that the administration was supportive of school improvement and professional development. They should be commended for working on their communication DRSLs. Faculty meetings have been used to introduce the staff to the Six Traits of Writing, and for in-service on incorporating best practices in teaching.

- b) *To what extent does the school create conditions that support productive change and continuous improvement?*

The school has a limited understanding of the change process, but supports the work in departments and with teachers for implementing school improvement initiatives. The Visiting Team recommends that the school encourage more

collaboration across the curriculum to sustain commitment to continuous improvement and developing a shared vision.

CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS (NAAS) STANDARDS I-XI

Standard I – Educational Program

This standard is met. Richfield High’s instructional and organizational practices, as well as its policies and procedures, support the DRSLs and prepare students to succeed in a culturally diverse, democratic society.

Standard II – Student Personnel Services

This standard is met. Student personnel services are designed to give systematic assistance to students. The assigned group of personnel for guidance includes a minimum of one full-time person for every 400 students enrolled.

Standard III – School Plant and Equipment

This standard is met. The school plant provides for a variety of instructional activities and programs, and incorporates aesthetic features that contribute to a positive educational atmosphere.

Standard IV – Library Media Program

This standard is **not** met. The school does not have a certified library media teacher to provide instruction, resources, and activities to promote independent use of ideas and information.

Standard V – Records

This standard is met. Student records are maintained, handled, and protected in the best interests of students and parents. Students and parents have the right to access personal student records and are ensured the privacy of such records, as guaranteed by federal legislation.

Standard VI – School Improvement (This is addressed in the self-study.)

This standard is met. The school improvement plan focuses on the total school rather than each of the separate components within the school.

Standard VII – Preparation of Personnel

This standard is met. All professional personnel are in compliance with the licensing requirements of the State of Utah and are properly endorsed for the subjects they are assigned.

Standard VIII – Administration

This standard is met. The administration of Richfield High School provides educational leadership, supervises and coordinates programs, and carries out the necessary administrative procedures.

Standard IX – Teacher Load

This standard is met. Teachers have the equivalent of one preparation period per day. Teacher class loads are within Northwest guidelines.

Standard X – Activities

This standard is met. Richfield High School supports a range of activities that supplement the basic instructional program by providing additional experiences and opportunities for learning to take place.

Standard XI – Business Practices

This standard is met. The school is financially responsible. Proper budgetary procedures and generally accepted accounting principles are followed for all school funds. The school's advertising and promotional literature are completely truthful and ethical.

CHAPTER 5: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS – ACTION PLAN

- a) *To what extent is the schoolwide action plan adequate in addressing the critical areas for follow-up?*

Richfield High School identified significant DRSLs, but the action plan does not align with the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs. Richfield High School's action plan should be refined to address needs of students. The Visiting Team recommends that data be collected to identify achievement gaps, and that steps be taken to define a process to ensure all students are learning.

- b) *To what extent is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, schoolwide and system-wide?*

It is evident that most staff members are committed to school improvement. The administration is united, and the staff supports their efforts to improve student learning at Richfield High School. The school needs to unite in focusing on a viable action plan that addresses the DRSLs. An assessment plan should also be developed to measure the outcome of their efforts.

- c) *How sound does the follow-up process that the school intends to use for monitoring the accomplishments of the schoolwide action plan appear to be?*

The administration and staff at Richfield High School need to gain a better understanding of the school improvement process. The Visiting Team believes that much of the work has been completed, but the results are not clearly articulated. The Visiting Team further believes that Richfield High School will revisit the action plan and implement it to ensure the success of all stakeholders.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends Richfield High School for moving in the right direction with professional development that focuses on best practices.
- The Visiting Team commends Richfield High School for the dedication of its teachers, who genuinely believe that all students can succeed and are committed to the success of their students.
- The Visiting Team commends Richfield High School for a variety of academic, vocational, and extracurricular opportunities for students to be successful.
- The Visiting Team commends Richfield High School for an ongoing working relationship with both the residential and business community. The school has a functioning PTA and Community Council that actively support student achievement.
- The Visiting Team commends Richfield High School for a seasoned, well-qualified staff that genuinely cares about students.
- The Visiting Team commends Richfield High School for its positive learning climate, as evidenced by the cleanliness of the building, cordiality of students and staff, and availability of current technology.

Recommendations:

- The school needs to complete a comprehensive profile that includes information on attendance, discipline, community demographics, extracurricular activities, student performance, etc. Wherever possible, information should be disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, special education status, and income. Profile efforts should extend to gathering and using data to monitor and evaluate improvement efforts as they are implemented and refined.
- Using the NSSE rubrics, the school needs to complete the focus group process. It is recommended that the staff be divided into seven focus groups that include not only teachers, but also parents, students, and other appropriate stakeholders.
- The Visiting Team recommends that a leadership team be organized to include all stakeholders. This team should extend to every department and/or building, and include students and parents.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the departmental analysis be completed. Departments need to complete sections on the eleven guiding questions, areas of strength, and recommendations for growth, as outlined by the self-analysis process.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the staff at Richfield High School continue to collaborate to develop and implement the school's learning goals. Collegial teams within departments and across the curriculum need to engage in shared decision making and seek imaginative solutions to problems that need to be addressed by the school.